

Appendix H

HEALTH, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO
Councillor Nick Chapman

The areas covered in our portfolio are wide ranging and complex. The portfolio includes several multi agency partnerships, led by Blaby District Council.

Health, Leisure, and Tourism

The 2026-27 financial year represents an exciting opportunity for Blaby District Council to build on the momentum of its ongoing work in Health, Leisure, and Tourism Services. Through innovation, strategic partnerships and a focus on community outcomes, the council will deliver on several key initiatives designed to enhance the quality of life for residents. Below, we outline the key achievements and priorities that will define our progress over the coming year.

The Health, Leisure, and Tourism Service is focused on creating opportunities for residents to lead active, healthy lifestyles while promoting the district as a vibrant destination. For the year ahead, the team will continue to deliver on its commitments to improve health outcomes, support sustainable tourism growth and manage leisure services effectively. Highlights include:

- 1. Strategic Sports Planning:** The council will continue to focus on implementing technical recommendations for provision of playing fields and sports facilities across the district, supporting the delivery of new facilities where developer contributions are sufficient.
- 2. Active Blaby Programme:** The Active Blaby initiative has gone from strength to strength, benefitting hugely from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, website, and digital tools. These enhancements have ensured a more user-friendly experience for residents accessing sport and physical activity services. Key performance statistics include:
 - a. 42,202 attendances
 - b. 2,185 participants
 - c. 61 programmes delivered
 - d. 90% of Steady Steps class participants feel less worried about falling
 - e. 100% of participants would recommend the service to a friend
- 3. Health & Wellbeing Services:** The council have delivered targeted programmes under its Health & Wellbeing Service for Blaby and Oadby and Wigston residents as part of the shared service partnership delivered by BDC. These initiatives include tailored interventions to promote physical activity and wellbeing among priority groups.
- 4. Tourism Growth Plan:** The Tourism Growth Plan has played a key role in supporting local businesses, enhancing visitor experiences, and raising the profile of Blaby as a key tourism destination. Several Blaby tourism partners

received awards at the recent Leicestershire Tourism Awards and we aim to build upon this success in 26/27.

5. **A Place to Grow (APTG):** The community garden continues to provide a space for health, education, and social inclusion, with new programmes and activities being planned to engage a wider audience. We will also finalise the process for APTG to be managed as a Constituted Group, enabling APTG access to a broader range of external funding.
6. **Leisure Contract Management:** The council will maintain its robust partnership with SLM, ensuring high-quality leisure provision through monthly and quarterly contract meetings. Additionally, the delivery of new gym capacity at Enderby Leisure Centre will further enhance our offer to residents from January 2026.

Community Health & Wellbeing Plan

The Community Health & Wellbeing Plan 2023-26 has helped to guide the delivery of health interventions and support for residents. This document will be reviewed in 2026 as we approach the end of its cycle. Programmes supporting health and wellbeing participation will continue to be delivered across the district, with a focus on increasing accessibility and inclusivity.

Work and Skills Agenda

The Work and Skills Agenda focuses on empowering residents and businesses by providing access to resources, training, and opportunities to develop local skills and drive economic growth. Key initiatives for 2026-27 include:

1. **Youth Engagement and Leadership:** The Youth Council provides young people with a platform to influence decision-making and engage with local governance. This initiative supports the next generation of leaders while fostering civic pride and responsibility.
2. **Job Fairs and Employment Support:** Continued delivery of Job Fairs will connect residents with employers, training providers, and support services. These events will focus on raising awareness of sector-based opportunities and increasing employment rates.
3. **Business Support and Growth:** The council will further its Business Support Programme by delivering regular Business Breakfasts and newsletters. These efforts will provide local businesses with vital information, networking opportunities and access to innovation grants and funding for growth. The new Blaby District Business Board will enable the council to further improve its links with the business community and enable joint-working to deliver key outcomes for the local economy.
4. **Access to Financial Support:** We will continue to investigate the potential to establish a Business Grant's Scheme, to support micro businesses and SME's on their growth journey in Blaby district.

5. **Securing External Funding:** Efforts to secure external funding will continue, with a focus on supporting key projects and services. This will involve identifying new funding streams to bolster community and economic initiatives.

Community Engagement and Voluntary Sector Support

Blaby District Council remains committed to fostering a strong and resilient community by supporting voluntary organisations and encouraging civic participation. For 2026-27, priorities include:

1. **Support for the Armed Forces Community:** The council will enhance its engagement with the armed forces community through tailored initiatives that recognise their unique contributions and needs, strengthening the council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and seeking the 'Gold' award.
2. **Community Grants and Blaby Lottery:** The council will deliver Community Grants to support local projects that improve the quality of life for residents. The Blaby Lottery will continue to provide an innovative funding source for local voluntary groups.
3. **Voluntary Sector Support:** Providing guidance and resources for voluntary organisations will be a key focus, ensuring these groups can thrive and continue their invaluable work in the community.
4. **Innovation and Collaboration:** New initiatives to promote Access to Grant Funding for Innovation will help organisations explore creative solutions to local challenges. This will be complemented by efforts to encourage collaborative working across sectors.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nick Chapman

Senior Officers: Assets and Major Projects Group Manager

Portfolio Total

Health, Community and Economic Development - Total	2025/26 Approved Budget [A]	2025/26 Revised Estimate [B]	2026/27 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£818,760	£928,050	£961,070	£142,310 17.38%	£33,020 3.56%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£176,913	£698,911	£206,682	£29,769 16.83%	£492,229 -70.43%
3. Direct Income	-£798,912	-£1,113,339	-£1,193,400	-£394,488 49.38%	-£80,061 7.19%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£196,761	£513,622	-£25,648	-£222,409 -113.04%	£539,270 -104.99%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	15.48	18.48	19.67	4.19 27.07%	1.19 6.44%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio incorporates the establishment costs for Health & Leisure Services, and the Community Development, Work & Skills.

The establishment budget for 2025/26 allowed for a 3% pay award within services. The nationally agreed pay award for Chief Executives, Chief Officers (Directors and Group Managers) and officers on grades 1 to 9 was 3.2%. The establishment budget for 2026/27 allows for a 3% estimated pay award within each portfolio and a further 1% held centrally, contractual increments where appropriate, and employer's national insurance and pension contributions within service budgets. The Leicestershire Pension Fund confirmed a decrease in the Councils Employer contribution rate of 6% from 2026/27. The Council currently pays a rate of 28.3%, this will reduce to 22.3% from 2026/27 through to 2028/29.

Some expenditure within Health, Leisure and Tourism Services is externally funded and as such has not been included within the budget until that funding has been confirmed. This is the reason why the revised estimate is significantly higher than the 2025/26 approved budget, since the external funding was only secured after the budget was approved last February. Discussions have been undertaken with OWBC to continue the Partnership for an additional two years; this is subject to formal sign off at committee in February 2026.

Establishment costs have increased within Community, Business Work and Skills as an additional post has been accounted for in 2026/27.

Other gross direct expenditure in the 2025/26 revised estimate is inflated by several factors. These include external funding (mainly for Health & Leisure Services) which is unconfirmed for 2026/27, and unspent budget provision carried forward from 2024/25 (non-recurring). The contractual arrangement with Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to run their Sport and Physical Activity programme has continued. Discussions are currently being undertaken with the potential to continue for a further two years. Budget will be added to reflect this once confirmed.

In terms of income for this portfolio, the same principles apply to the 2025/26 revised estimate as described above, i.e., since the original budget was approved in February 2025, we have secured additional external funding in respect of Health & Leisure Services.

Leisure Centres

	2025/26 Approved Budget [A]	2025/26 Revised Estimate [B]	2026/27 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
3. Direct Income	-£779,012	-£825,620	-£1,041,880	-£262,868 33.74%	£216,260 26.19%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	-£779,012	-£825,620	-£1,041,880	-£262,868 33.74%	£216,260 26.19%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. Not applicable.
2. Not applicable.
3. This is income to be received through the leisure management contract. The revised estimate is in line with contractual uplift that was not included in the approved budget. Inflation is also applied to arrive at the estimated management fee for 2026/27,
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Not applicable.

Health, Leisure & Tourism

	2025/26 Approved Budget [A]	2025/26 Revised Estimate [B]	2026/27 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£310,040	£443,580	£429,030	£118,990 38.38%	-£14,550 -3.28%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£96,438	£414,928	£108,543	£12,105 12.55%	- £306,385 -73.84%
3. Direct Income	-£7,400	-£250,139	-£139,020	-£131,620 1778.65%	£111,119 -44.42%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£399,078	£608,369	£398,553	-£525 -0.13%	- £209,816 -34.49%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.26	8.26	8.45	3.19 60.65%	0.19 2.30%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2026/27 establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, any increase to employer's national insurance and the decrease of 6% to the Councils pension contributions. The revised estimate includes externally funded posts that had not been confirmed at the time of budget setting. The proposed budget for 2026/27 also includes these externally funded posts,
2. Revised estimate includes externally funded project expenditure (level currently unknown for 2026/27)
3. Awaiting level of external funding to be confirmed for 2026/27.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Externally funded posts have been included in the budget as per point 1. These posts were not included in the 2025/26 approved budget but are included within the revised estimate.

Community, Business, Work & Skills

	2025/26 Approved Budget [A]	2025/26 Revised Estimate [B]	2026/27 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£508,720	£484,470	£532,040	£23,320 4.58%	£47,570 9.82%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£80,476	£283,983	£98,139	£17,663 21.95%	- £185,844 -65.44%
3. Direct Income	-£12,500	-£37,580	-£12,500	£0 0.00%	£25,080 -66.74%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£576,696	£730,873	£617,679	£40,983 7.11%	- £113,194 -15.49%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	10.22	10.22	11.22	1.00 9.78%	1.00 9.78%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2026/27 establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, any increase to employer's national insurance and the decrease of 6% to the Council's pension contributions.
2. The revised estimate includes several one-off budgets that were carried forward from 2024/25. These have been removed for 2026/27, which also reflects a reduction in costs relating to the Blaby Lottery (income also reduced).
3. Only funding that has been confirmed is included in the Direct Income. Income earned via the Blaby Lottery and Youth Council Grants has been reflected in the revised estimate. Proposed budget for 2026/27 in relation to the Blaby Lottery in line with 2025/26 approved budget.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Additional Business Admin Support included in the 2026/27 proposed budget.

Operational Summary

Leisure Centres

Enderby Leisure Centre continues to thrive with an attractive range of services and the number of visits. Huncote's performance is slowly increasing. Quarterly performance and financial reports are shared with the group manager and portfolio holder.

Health & Leisure Services

External funding currently supports services such as exercise referral, positive activities for young people, heartsmart and 'falls prevention' programmes.

The service provides a range of outreach services across the district engaging over 5,000 residents and continues to be successful in securing significant levels of external funding from various sources.

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council have now confirmed they are able to sign up to an additional two year contract, taking the contract through to 2028. Formal ratification will be finalised by their Committee in February 2026.

Tourism

Members of the tourism partnership remain committed to delivering the new Tourism Growth Plan 2025-30. Feedback from the businesses has been very positive in terms of visitor numbers.

Portfolio Priorities

The priorities for our portfolio are: -

Health, Leisure, and Tourism

- To ensure that our Leisure Contract delivers the expected financial return and provides a high quality service for residents.
- Influence developments throughout the District through the use of the Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan, Built Facilities Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy and Tourism Plan.
- Ensuring that BDC can benefit from Tourism, including delivering the tourism growth plan. We will continue to work with partners on the tourism partnership board, ensuring we bring them with us as the district's tourism offer grows and evolves.
- To work with partners to deliver the Community Health & Wellbeing Plan.

Community, Business, Work and Skills

- Deliver the action plans that underpin the Economic Development Framework.

- To work with all our businesses to empower the growth of the economy across Blaby District.
- Achieve the Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award.
- Work with young people to enable them to engage and inform local democracy.
- Support Voluntary and Community groups across the District to thrive.

Services

Leisure Centres

- Huncote provides a range of leisure services including a fitness suite (gym), exercise classes, all weather pitches, squash courts, sports hall, café, dance studio, Virtual Spinning Studio, and meeting room. This service is delivered through a leisure contract with SLM (expires 2029). The team are investigating how a new volleyball court could increase usership and variety in sports provision.
- Enderby Leisure Centre provides a range of leisure services including a swimming pool, swimming lessons, fitness suite, spa suite, indoor bowls, golf course, fitness studios, all weather pitches, café, soft play centre, and meeting room. This service is delivered through a leisure contract with SLM.

Health & Leisure

- Health Improvement – services include A Place to Grow, Dementia Action Alliance, Health Promotion, delivering the Community Health & Wellbeing Plan and playing an active part in the Community Health & Wellbeing Partnership. This includes partners such as our Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Public Health, Primary Care Networks, and other partners around health.
- Tourism & Heritage – services include the delivery of the Blaby District Tourism Growth Plan, a range of projects such as Walk & Ride, Heritage, and Tourism Map and the Visit Blaby digital offer.
- Sport & Physical Activity – these services complement the universal offer in our Leisure Centres by providing outreach programmes throughout our District to residents who may not be able to access our centres. They also provide support to help develop our network of community sports clubs. The services include exercise referral, outreach physical activity sessions, cardiac rehabilitation scheme, falls prevention, older people activities, and weight management.

Community, Business, Work and Skills

- This team offers a wide range of support to our businesses including financial, training, access to specialist support and advice, skills including digital skills to enhance how businesses operate. The team have developed an Economic Development Framework (adopted by Cabinet Executive in September 2023) and five action plans that sit under this which support the delivery of the framework. They will coordinate activity across different teams within the local authority to ensure the delivery of these plans.

- Alongside the above the team delivers a series of jobs fairs and business breakfasts to help our residents gain employment and our businesses to fill vacancies and ensure our businesses can share good practice and network.
- The Community Grants scheme supports the voluntary and community sector to develop and strengthen facilities and activities. The health checks that are offered to community group's support them to have the correct governance structure and documentation in place. Over the last twelve months our focus has been helping these groups to continue to operate whilst going through a cost-of-living crisis.
- The Love Blaby Lottery is a weekly online lottery created to support local good causes within the district. The lottery mission is to raise money in the community for the community and has an annual income of around £30,000.
- Our funding officer continues to identify opportunities to secure external funding.

Key Points

Doing things differently – plans for the coming year	<p><u>Leisure Contract:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase usage of facilities across both sites. <p><u>Health & Leisure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with partners to deliver our Community Health & Wellbeing Plan. <p><u>Tourism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to implement the Tourism Growth Plan • To support the Economic Development Framework and specifically the Building Pride in Place Action Plan. <p><u>Community, Business, Work & Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver the five action plans that underpin the Economic Development Framework. • To deliver our work & skills pathway to support our businesses with recruitment and retention. • To identify and submit applications for external funding to support delivery of Blaby's priorities and corporate plan. • To support our young people to have a voice through the Youth Council on what matters to them. • To deliver our community offer to support our community and voluntary groups and our residents.
Income generation	<p><u>Health & Leisure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure income from the Leisure Contract. • Continue to secure external funding to support front line delivery.
Capital plans for the portfolio	<p>£140k is allocated to the Walk and Ride project, but it is anticipated that £26k will be used to contribute to a potential new volleyball court at Huncote Leisure Centre. This is subject to confirmation from partners on external match funding.</p>

Key Performance Indicators

Health, Leisure & Tourism Services:

- Active Lives Survey (measures levels of physical activity).
- STEAM Data (provides Tourism statistics).

Leisure Contract (Enderby & Huncote Leisure Centres):

- Usage levels
- Income levels
- Number of complaints
- QUEST score (independent inspection)

Community, Business, Work & Skills

- Number of people supported to take up a work placement, trial and / or a job.
- Number of businesses supported.
- Number of VCS groups supported via the Community Grants Programme and Income from Blaby Lottery

Customers

- Use data to understand our customers and local trends, such as the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment, Community Health & Wellbeing Plan, Sport England data, Lightbulb data, and Mosaic.
- Conduct evaluations and seek customer feedback to improve services.
- Collection of positive comments and compliments from our customers and partners.
- SLM – monthly joint working meetings and quarterly contract monitoring

Risks

- External funding supports three posts (Active Blaby Referral Co-ordinator x2 and Community Engagement Officer x1) across the Health, Leisure and Tourism services. These posts currently deliver our Active Blaby initiative which includes a wide range of Physical Activity and Active Referral services that support the inactive, vulnerable, elderly, people with dementia and disability, residents at risk of developing health conditions including mental health and vulnerable young people. We have received written confirmation from OWBC of their intention to continue the contract until 2028, but this is subject to their committee approval in February 2026.
- Performance of Leisure Contractor (SLM) and the impact of the operating costs on the leisure industry. This is mitigated through the performance management approach outlined above.
- Recruitment and retention of qualified staff.